572 [201] Friends seldom or never give signs of their affection, apart from gifts and mutual assistance. Men are seldom seen embracing, although women do so frequently.

The Nkundó are familiar with friendship pacts (called bowéka or, among the Bombwanja, libandeko) (1). Two persons of the same

1. Bofilí among the Ekonda, mbele among the Bateke.

sex are bound to one another in friendship (kota bowéka or libandeko) [251] in the presence of a witness (ndonga), whose duty it is to deliver the gifts that are exchanged.

The conclusion of a friendship agreement is actually a custom of the women; men -- usually the husbands -- create friendship bonds only secondarily, in imitation of their wives. This pact is not automatically hereditary; the children may continue it -- through the same ndonga as their fathers -- but they are free to let it lapse. (2)

2. See also a special reason for friendship pacts in Chapter IV, Article I.

Two elements may be distinguished in the friendship pact: congeniality or affection and mutual assistance. The latter is in itself a sign of friendship, but it is not infrequently the sole reason for the pact among men who seek reciprocal support by this means. [36] As for the women, it may be said, on the contrary, that gifts are considered purely as tokens of affection and their bonds are based exclusively on affection. Often women who are very fond of each other do not bind themselves in a friendship pact but are content to show their affection in all simplicity. Men also may be very good friends without having recourse to a pact. But the conclusion of an agreement makes their relationship public and thus protects it against deleterious influences such as misunderstandings, disagreements, outbursts of anger, etc. One might say that the pact represents the addition of the element of reason to the element of emotion.

764 for it was necessary first to celebrate the farewell feast, and the widower's family had to gather to discuss the matter and collect the valuables needed for the funeral payment (see the article which follows). Only after all that did the young men belonging to the [487] husband's family take the mortal remains upon their shoulders -- wrapped in a mat or enclosed in a coffin, depending on the case.

If possible all the husband's relatives take part in the procession. The pallbearers walk at the head. The men are armed with bows and arrows, knives and sticks, seldom with spears. The women accompany them [425], wailing. The husband and, if necessary, a few relatives carry with them the various objects they will need for the payment. Some men have a lindzi (an [519] ocarina) (1) or an antelope horn on which they play intermittently. (2)

1. See my "Note sur les instruments de Musique à l'Equateur (Note on Musical Instruments at the Equator)" in Congo, 1935, Vol. 2, July, p. 187, figs. 1 and 2 (p. 199).

2. Sometimes there is also an accompaniment of drums.

• [203] At the time the corpse is lifted and while passing through villages between their own and their destination, the lokolé is struck with regular and equal blows (-kémya) to announce the arrival of the funeral procession.

584 764 The chief personage among those who follow the corpse is not the husband, but the ndonga. He may never be absent at that time. Even if the husband is deceased and the procession is that of a widow who has not remarried, this ndonga must always be in the party. The duty of bringing the corpse of a married woman is above all his.

The ndonga may go ahead of the procession to inform the family of the deceased of her death, and if there is a great distance between the wife's village and the husband's, he may not be able

the sap, which she then mixes with water. The resulting liquid is oily and foams like soap. She places a few drops on a piece of banana leaf and makes a sachet of it. She holds this against the breast for a certain time until the boil, similar to a blood clot or a piece of liver, leaves the breast and enters the sachet. She then shows it to those present. From then on the mother can nurse her child without fear; her milk has become healthy and normal.

2) The mother's public confession must include the names of all the men with whom she has had carnal relations since the child's conception. Other groups, such as the Inkili, extend this obligation even to instances preceding that moment but which have not been declared at a previous occasion. The confession is public. The mamesusu related to the husband begins to crush the leaves to be used in rubbing the breast; as she moves the pestle and says to the mother, "Name a man." The mother replies by giving a name. The mamesusu says nyonga, "indemnity." Then all those present say ngondo, ngondo, ngondo, "absolved." Then it is the other mamesusu's turn, and she interrogates the mother in the same way. The process continues till all the names have been cited. If [496] the mother cites the name of a man who is a close relative of her husband and who therefore does not need to pay an indemnity, the mamesusu does not reply nyonga. Instead a member of the husband's clan makes the gesture signifying exemption: he holds the kernel of a palm nut (lolikó) in his left hand and throws it by means of a small board which he holds in his right. Among the Inkili the man takes two kernels and strikes them against each other and then throws them away. Were the woman to suppress a name the child would die. If she has no admission to make, she replies, "No one besides my husband."

The indemnity that must be paid by those who are obligated to do so consists of a hen and a bunch of bananas (or their cash value) which are to be given to the mamesusu, who will then divide them. Were the accused to refuse, the husband would demand a regular indemnity from him after the end of the seclusion.

The Bombwanja have this confession at the time of the fastening of the fetus. A few old women married into the clan carry out the interrogation. The kernel of the fruit of the palm is thrown by means of a knife.